

Historic Ellicott City Flood Workgroup

Minutes
(8-25-16)

Attendance/Roll Call:

Present	Not Present
➤ Debbie Slack Katz (Chair)	➤ Mark Deluca (Staff)
➤ Frank Durantaye (Member)	➤ Ryan Miller (Staff)
➤ Ken McNaughton (Member)	➤ Bruno Reich (Member)
➤ Kevin Bloom (Member)	
➤ Lori Lilly (Member)	
➤ Ron Peters (Member)	
➤ Dave Myers (Member)	
➤ Gary Smith (Staff)	
➤ Jim Caldwell (Staff)	
➤ Bob Frances (Staff)	
➤ Raj Kudchadkar (Staff)	

Raj and Debbie informed the group that Jason McMillan dropped from the Flood Workgroup.

Calendar Review

- Sept 12
- Oct 10 – Group discussed that 10/10 is Columbus Day, a government holiday, so we will need new date – 10/17 will likely be the new date

Review of meeting minutes

- Ken – emphasized that private property and insurance still need to be included as future agenda items.
- Debbie clarified that she has asked Mark for final wall inventory report (not will ask).

Ken motioned to approve the minutes, Ron second, all approve.

Update on Flood Recovery – Raj provided an overview of the recovery effort to date and future actions to come by walking through what the County has been doing this last week:

- **August 13th:** County Council considered emergency legislation CB58-2016 to waive permit fees for those impacted by the flash flooding. A wide variety of permits were concluded, such as electrical, plumbing, utilities, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and water and sewer service for property and business owners affected by the flood. The bill is retroactive to August 1st, and fees for those impacted would be waived through October 31st.

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- **August 13th-14th:** More than 650 people accessed Ellicott City's Main Street that weekend as property owners, merchants and residents continued their clean-up.
- **August 14th:** By that 2nd weekend, public works crews have already hauled away more than 60 tons of debris.
- **August 13th-14th:** After that 2nd weekend, the County again temporarily suspended access to Main Street so that public works crews could continue with important work. Repair of retaining walls, storm drains, pipes and other critical infrastructure will move forward.
- **August 15th:** The SBA Disaster Loan Outreach Center was opened at the 50+ Center. The center will explain loan options available to businesses and residents to help with rebuilding and recovering the loss of inventory and personal property.
- **August 17th:** The first EC Strong Recovery Fund Committee meeting was held. The purpose of that meeting was to establish a framework for the committee and begin to coordinate processes and procedures to distribute donated relief funds.
- **August 17th:** The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) was granted \$2.5 million to make low (or no) interest loans to eligible businesses in Ellicott City.
- **August 18th:** Residents, merchants and building owners were given extended access to the Main Street area through Monday, Aug. 22. Cars, vans, pickups and small box trucks up to 15-feet long were also allowed to enter the Main Street area for the retrieval of larger items and belongings.
- **August 21st:** Over the past weekend, more than 650 business owners, homeowners and renters were allowed back in their buildings to continue with cleanup and recovery.
- **August 21st:** AmeriCorps volunteers completed a three-week assignment volunteering in support of the Ellicott City recovery and cleanup. These volunteers assisted with much of the staging and logistics for the county's incident management team.
- **August 22nd:** As of this week, Main Street will be closed for three weeks to allow county public works crews and other utility workers the time they need to complete critical work. The goal is to reopening Main Street to pedestrian traffic at or near Sept. 16th.
- **August 22nd:** County Executive Kittleman announced the membership of the Historic Ellicott City Recovery Community Advisory Group, established in the days following the July 30th flood. The group is a cross-section of representatives of local organizations, preservation groups, businesses, residents and the faith-based community who will offer direction on the continued recovery efforts for Ellicott City. Former County Executive Jim Robey will serve as chair. Named to the committee are:
 - Tammy Beideman, Sweet Elizabeth Jane
 - Kevin Bloom, West End Service
 - Simon Cortes, La Palapa Restaurant

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- Frank Durantaye, west end resident
 - Andy Hall, former president, Ellicott City Partnership
 - Mark Hemmis, Phoenix Emporium owner
 - Debbie Slack Katz, Flood Workgroup Chair and ECP Board
 - Rev. Joan King, St. Luke's AME Church
 - Gary Maule, Patapsco Heritage Greenway
 - Ron Peters, property owner
 - Bruno Reich, Historic Preservation Commission
 - Don Reuwer, property owner
 - Angela Tersiguel, Tersiguel's Restaurant
 - Beth Woodruff, west end resident
- **August 22nd:** County Executive Kittleman signed an executive order requesting the County Council hold an emergency session to extend the State of Emergency in Ellicott City until September 20th. By extending the State of Emergency, the county would be allowed to continue to facilitate the recovery by completing extensive critical public works projects and repair work, including sidewalks, roadways and retaining walls.
- **August 22nd:** The Administration also issued a midpoint report on the county's response to the flooding event. The report chronicles the steps the county took immediately after the flash flood hit Ellicott City as well as initial damage costs, details of infrastructure and waterway recovery projects and overviews of how various county agencies responded with help for victims.
- **What to expect ahead:**
- This week - a portion of the western end of Main Street that sustained minor or no damage was reopened, shrinking the perimeter of Main Street's "no-access" area. Access will be restored at the top of Main Street from Ellicott Mills Drive to Court Avenue, and on Old Columbia Pike down to Main Street.
 - On-street parking on Main Street continues to be prohibited and parking in general will be tight. Limited parking will be available on parking Lot "D" to accommodate employees and customers of those accessible businesses.
 - The county will also provide seven days of credentialed access to those businesses on Tiber Alley on the eastern part of Main Street to give more time to continue cleaning up. This access is not intended for customers or the public and access will be controlled by security.
 - An educational forum on loan programs and business services sponsored by the Howard County Economic Development Authority, will be held on Wednesday, Aug. 31st.
 - Two traffic signals, conduits and wiring are being repaired along Main Street at both Maryland Avenue and Old Columbia Pike.
 - Installation of a temporary sustaining wall of stone, known as riprap, is underway between Lot F and Lot E as is the construction of a retaining wall on Hamilton Avenue.

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- BGE will be installing a new, 4-inch natural gas line on Main Street from Court Avenue to Maryland Avenue. BGE will be connecting this line to nearly 70 properties along Main Street.
- Repairs and rehabilitation work continues at the Clock plaza near the B&O Museum.
- Merryman and Hill streets to be re-paved
- Half of Parking Lot “F” to reopen
- Depending on the weather, County and State Highway Administration officials are hopeful that the bridge that spans the Patapsco River from Baltimore County will reopen in early-September.
- County officials expect the no-access perimeter to continue shrinking.

➤ **Please Remember:**

- The Disaster Assistance Center remains open in the Ellicott City 50+ Center from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., for those who may need assistance.
- There is also a hotline available to help as well. Residents and businesses of the Main Street area may call 410-313-0863 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. for assistance.
- The County continues to update its online flood recovery resource page at www.ECfloodrecovery.org

Long term planning – Citizen Advisory Group – Master Plan for EC – DPZ would be gatekeeper – health and safety will be priority – DPW and OEM working with contractors on technical look at the watershed – engineers will be modeling watershed conditions.

Two studies to be implemented: S & S – anecdotal study of where water came from and McCormick Taylor – expanding modeling to cover entire Hudson from Toll House down to Patapsco; collecting info from other three tribes; 3-6 mo for 2D model.

Each department going after different grants; waiting for a response from feds; NRCS came up with 10 million dollars to repair walls – 75/25 cost share.

Frank – after 2011 flood, all money went to county property – how to get money on private property; Frank – wall by Architecture Collaborative – wall was determined to be repaired and now not – why?

Ken asked about permitting – Raj responded should be addressed during Master Plan

Reflection on Flood Aftermath – Each member received **10-minutes** to discuss the personal impact of the flood and reflect on topics important to them.

- Frank – private property should not be an issue – we need to keep water in the creek – Tersiguel’s – Old Columbia Pike did not have a lot of water – more problematic on Tiber and Hudson – lots of water from Rogers – problems up there – West End residents watch the creek – Hudson is full during a 10-year storm – last 12-13 years, water rises more rapidly, even more so after Burgess Mill was built; BGE – retention pond – can we look into this; 2.5 million dedicated by Kittleman not being spent fast enough; we got our Water Day; questioned new development across from 7/11 that “will improve the Tiber.”

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- Kevin – This was his 3rd or 4th flood event – he represents his family – this one is the worst – when is enough enough? – good talk with Mark D after flood; fabricated a cage 7’ tall to put over drain at West End; it’s about nuts and bolts – do we need write letters to our congressmen? - needs to be a combination of things done to address issue; figure out how to get money so we can move forward; what we do will impact other generations; Debbie asked Kevin “how do we make it so that you don’t leave?”
- Ron – McCormick Taylor report – took 3 years since 2011 – see questions below – we need to target areas in upper watershed in each subwatersheds – 300 page study on walls that took 7 months – why not have ponds all up and down the watershed? Debbie asked if we are looking at soft cost or just hard costs? Ron has 3 different properties with 16 tenants and 15 have had moved out; re-building a house; wants to see retention ponds upstream – why no ponds on 29? He has seen flooding off hard baked ground at home and golf course – need to look at pervious areas as well; need to slow the flow. Q on McT study:
 - Why did they only target one area to put their storm water containment area. Route 29/ 40 which would only help the upper 30 percent ,
 - Why did they not include route 29 runoff in the study,
 - Why did they not have the vision to look at adding more flood water containment facilities along the BGE corridor and along the 1.8 miles of route 29, which contributed over 3.6 million gallons of water to the Hudson in the recent flood.
 - Why would they say the pipe at west end starting at Barrington's property crossing under main to Klein's property is 108 inch in diameter when the Inlet had a sleeve installed in 1986 and now is only 84 inch in diameter, about 35 % less in size , which equates to 35% less volume capable of going through the pipe ,
 - Is the new study , going to include the Tiber and Catrock run, if not why not , they contribute large volumes of water that need to be contained for short period s also
 - If the county /state had spent the millions of dollars they are spending now on cleanup rebuilding on flood water containment areas after Lee , we wouldn't be in this situation now
 - Lori also asked about the McT study: regarding the storage projects that we identified when I was at CWP that are in the 2012 Tiber Hudson Subwatershed Action Plan - McT stated in the study that they modeled them as if they were water quality projects designed for treating 1" but they were not - I provided the County (Howard Saltzman at the time) with the points, drainage areas, type of practice (e.g. extended detention pond), assumptions for the water quantity storage projects. Of course the study showed that they would not help at all because they were modeled as water quality projects for 100 year events. But would they help if modeled as actual storage projects and if not for 100 year events, would they help for 2, 5, 10 or 50 year events?
- Lori
 - Wants to get all the walls fixed. Wall inventory just completed seems now irrelevant. Let’s not study them anymore and work on repairs.
 - Would like to see an independent scientific and technical advisory group pulled together to help advise the Flood Workgroup.
 - Would like more discussion about new development in the watershed as a future agenda item, how much has impervious cover increased over the years, how much is managed and not managed and how we can conserve our remaining green spaces, which will always be better than a stormwater management practice. What incentives can we put in place for conservation, what dis-incentives can we put in place for developers. Conservation easements, outright purchase, fee in lieu, impervious cover ordinances, increased stormwater management standards,

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- special protections, others. Can we have access to proposed new development plans in the watershed as soon as they are known and provide feedback on them?
- Would like more discussion about stormwater management, and what storms we can feasibly manage in the watershed. Managing for water quality will not help us, and we can not manage for even 100 year events let alone 1000 year, so what can we do in the middle? Would like to retrofit all the old development to manage those target storms. Would like to look at the drainage patterns and target our stormwater management retrofit efforts in sub-drainages. Would like to break the watershed down into pieces and determine appropriate measures at those scales, based on existing impervious cover and existing stormwater management practices.
 - Would like more discussion on floodplains, channel incision, eroded streambanks, and this broken watershed. The channel is so deep and does not have an opportunity to utilize the floodplain except with these extreme events. Would like to engineer and support opportunities for the stream to store water in the floodplain. This is what Lori has proposed for the MD Historical Trust grant that was received. Streambanks need to be regraded to allow the water to naturally do what it wants to do, move into the floodplain during a storm. There are multiple locations where we can do this – in the BGE corridor, below Papillon Dr, on the left bank after the stream crosses Frederick Rd, on the left bank below West End Services.
 - Would like to discuss and address in-stream sedimentation – all of the erosion of the stream banks has increased the bedload by FEET. This is particularly problematic in culverts and constricted areas and Lori has noticed that a particular area of concern is under the brew pub where she used to be able to walk almost fully upright and now need to hunch over significantly. Big rocks in culverts and constricted areas can be crushed because they hinder flow and create additional obstructions.
 - Would like to discuss restricting parking to parking garages that could be put in lots F and D and allowing only pedestrian access in the business district. Water could be stored on the lower levels of the parking garages during storms.
 - And to that end, would like to discuss how we can overflow water that we cannot otherwise manage or retain and how we can do this despite the back pressure of the Patapsco. Edward Glawe, a local land surveyor has an idea of concrete jetty wall placed at such an elevation in the Patapsco that it could allow the Tiber Hudson water to overflow, at least for certain storms.
- Ken
 - A vote of **condolence** and sympathy to all those who suffered most directly from the flood. Too many to name.
 - A vote of **thanks** to all the county officials and volunteers who worked hard on flood recovery. Too many people and too many acts to be specific in my ten minutes.
 - Thanks to ECP for the **Dinner Social** at Resurrection Church Hall on August 8, which brought residents and business owners together and offered interim resources and relief.
 - Although at **Greystone** we only lost electricity, gas, TV and internet for two or three days, our way of life has also been disrupted by the devastation on Main

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Street. Coupled with the more serious losses of friends and neighbors I found this very depressing.

- Historic Ellicott City (HEC) is meant to be one of the **best places** to live in the USA, yet we are subject to periodic catastrophic flooding.
- I notice at least three publications that **quote** the Flood Workgroup report of December 2015, and even recognize some of my own wording in these publications. This made me feel that I can contribute to a better future for HEC. I agree with Lori. We can make a difference.
- I emailed some **thoughts** to the group on August 14 and have circulated a copy here (attached, below).
- I am thinking about two things—How to **tame** future floodwaters, and how to make residences and businesses more **flood proof**.
- The text and photos are designed to offer some thoughts on the **special case** of a residence in the West End that must be condemned and rebuilt.
- The progression is as follows:
 - In 2014 a building was **demolished** and replaced with two floors supported by a concrete block construction, which looks flood-proof, even though flooding is less likely on the high south side.
 - Thirteen homes in the floodplain in [Indian Run Village](#) are built on concrete **pedestals**, which have a low area cross section that impedes flood water less and provides onsite parking. If a house like this was built in the West End, the residents' cars could be taken off Main Street. If such a design were approved and perhaps incentivized, it might prove a useful model.
 - It's important to preserve as much historical architecture in HEC as we can, but if a building must be demolished, we can also contemplate quirky compatible **contemporary** styles, such as the one on Route 29 near Route 216.
 - There is always resistance to change but keep in mind, at the high end, how I. M. Pei added a glass **pyramid** to The Louvre in Paris.
- Reconstruction on **New Cut Road** has been systematic and effective. On the Wednesday after July 30, three bridges were replaced or repaired so residents could access or leave their homes, road edges were repaired with rip rap and this week major changes are being made to a roadside parking lot.
- Dave – Advisory group is a good idea; we need hard data on other branches of streams; we need to focus more alarm system and gages; workgroup should be brought into more stormwater management discussions because that is our role; has McT study been bid out? Ribbed culverts – did that have any affect on keeping water backed up? project in Frederick could be a model for us; We may need to push elected officials; we need to look at membership – we lost Debra and Jason
- Gary – federal delegation sent letter to president for aid
- Debbie – appreciates candid points; we have a lot of work to do; asked Jahantab A. Siddiqui, Deputy Chief of Staff to clarify roles of two flood groups; ECP has collected 500k – given away gift cards and getting ready to give more small grants (1000s) and will have a clear process for distribution; need to retain people in city; will move quickly on grants; United Way needs to be used for humanitarian efforts; personal information will be redacted from review; more fundraisers coming up – big one at Nottingham's in Columbia; Saturday Market at Mt Ida's; Weinstein fundraiser on 9/18
- Frank – let's get things moving; bring experts together

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Flood Workgroup – Discussion of Executive Order 2015-06 and the future direction of the Flood Workgroup.

- Debbie – wants, for the record, where the differences between the groups are – we don't want to duplicate efforts
- What is capacity of individuals that are on both groups

New Business: Member topics of interest, important events, etc.

- Discussion on the Technical advisory group – should this be a subcommittee? Decided to invite experts to our next meeting as guests; all to email potential advisers to Debbie by 9/7.
- There was a special request to have Ryan and Mark at our next meeting.

REBUILDING HISTORIC ELLICOTT CITY

By Ken McNaughton

Two things we need to consider in recovering from the flood of 30 July 2016 are how to tame future floodwaters and how to make residences and businesses more flood proof.



One of the residences in the West End was demolished in 2014 and a new building is being erected in its place. The ground floor includes a course of concrete blocks that support two floors above. The building is on the south side of Frederick Road, on the opposite side from the Hudson Branch of the Tiber and is less prone to flooding because it is on higher ground than the north side. The concrete block construction looks quite flood resistant and it is easy to imagine that this floor could be used for less vulnerable items.



In 2005 I considered relocating from Ellicott City to [Cacapon South in West Virginia](#). There are thirteen pedestal homes in Indian Run Village, which is in a floodplain. The ground floor is a minimal cross-section concrete construction, which impedes floodwaters less and can be used for storage. It supports a pre-engineered chalet home above, which comes in four styles and sizes. If new houses in

the West End of Historic Ellicott City were built in this style, there would be onsite parking and cars could be kept off Main Street.

Ellicott City has some wonderful historic structures and some that may not survive increased flooding. As we discuss a master plan for a new century we have an opportunity to think about bold new ideas that can be beautiful as well as smart. There is a house that was built last century on the east side of Route 29 near Route 216 that still looks ahead of its time. Ellicott City can be quaint and quirky, not only for its ancient architecture,



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but also for its innovations. I. M. Pei was lambasted for daring to put a glass pyramid in the middle of The Louvre, a palace that became a museum. Now his innovation is widely considered to be genius.



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